



'FREE SPEECH'
RADIO HOLDS
ELECTIONS

THE ZAPATISTAS'
QUIET ANNIVERSARY

FT. GREENE
UNDER SIEGE

3

THE INDYPENDENT

THE NEW YORK CITY INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

ISSUE #43 JANUARY 14-FEBRUARY 3, 2004

WWW.NYC.INDYMEDIA.ORG

STILL ILLEGAL THREE BRONX TEENAGERS STRUGGLE TO MAKE IT IN AMERICA

BY MEREDITH MANDELL P.6

PHOTO: LINA PALLOTTA

BREAKFAST IN BAGHDAD

BY DAVID MARTINEZ

I have been working for the Spanish film crew for about two weeks now, and usually I'm due at work at seven in the morning. But that day, the 30th of December, I had a few extra hours, so I was looking forward to a leisurely breakfast and pot of tea in the hotel restaurant. The whole crew was there at different tables: the assorted activists, journalists and human-rights hardcases that live in our hotel. I had just taken my first sip of tea.

And then WHOOM. The windows rattled as a bomb exploded near the building. Everyone scrambled for cameras and jackets, and we hit the stairs as a herd, taking the steps three at a time. I jumped into a jeep with a Hungarian reporter friend and two soft-spoken men from Polish National Radio. "This is actually the first time I've tried to witness one of these," I confessed to one of the Poles as we pulled into the street. "The thing is," he replied, "when you do this, it is nothing original. When a bomb explodes, every journalist in Baghdad arrives."

A bomb had exploded on Karada, a crowded street of shops and food stalls. The target was a passing American convoy, but the device had missed and instead killed an Iraqi man. He lay dead on the street, covered with a cloth and a piece of cardboard. Another man was staggering around, bleeding profusely from his shoulder.

Journalists were everywhere, pushing through the crowd, jockeying for position. American soldiers stood nervously in the street, trying to look calm.

The crowd was getting angry. One man kicked a French photographer in the chest for pushing too hard in his attempt to take a picture of the corpse. Someone yelled in Arabic, "The journalists are agents of the Americans!"

Another man shouted at the Humvees that were approaching. "Go home! You only make people die!"

I returned to the hotel just in time to deposit my camera and hail a taxi to get to work on time. Needless to say, I didn't get to enjoy my leisurely breakfast. But there will be more pots of tea, I imagine.

And there will also be more bombings.

LIFE DURING WARTIME

The Spanish crew are good people and fun to work for. They are laid-back and like to joke a lot while working, but they are rude or oblivious to the Iraqis around them.

They are quite a well-known bunch back in Europe. Their last film was called "La Espalda del Mundo", or "The Back of the World", a documentary that was filmed in highland Peru, in Turkish Kurdistan, and on Death Row in Huntsville, Texas. It won several prizes at various festivals.

Their style is very formal and very European. Which means that they invade a woman's house with two camera operators, two sound recordists, two producers, a translator, and two drivers who are usually hanging around somewhere smoking cigarettes and waiting. After spending up

to two hours lighting the woman's kitchen, they tell her to go ahead and begin cooking while they film her.

They tell her to stop while they change camera angles, and then tell her to begin again. It all starts to look a lot like a dramatic film: Take One, Take Two, etc.

The film is about life in Baghdad before and after the war. They were here in February, and they are now filming the second part of the piece. They have a stridently anti-war and anti-American stance on the whole affair, so I don't think the film will get much play in the States.

We've been filming a lot of people who have lost family or friends in the bombing. We shoot in hospitals, where all the doctors are around 25 years old. The older ones were fired for being Baathists, adding to the sixty-percent unemployment in Iraq.

We talk to children who were burned when bombs hit a hospital next to their school and a teacher who lost six of her family and half of her students in two weeks. People cry in front of the cameras at times. Life here in Iraq is very, very hard for most people, and they are very, very tired.

Today we interviewed the family of a 12-year-old girl who had been severely wounded when her house was hit by a cluster bomb. There is a hole the size of a basketball in her blanket where the shrapnel tore into her side and broke her arm. She told us about her experience, completely in Arabic, but I needed no translation. It was a heartbreaking story, and for the first time after a month in this broken, torn, tragic place, I started to break down myself. Of course I had to keep quiet, though, because we were recording.

continued on page 4

COMMUNITY CALENDAR, P.2 • {MOSTLY} VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT GUIDE, P.8



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WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 100 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to illuminate and analyze issues impacting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The Independent is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

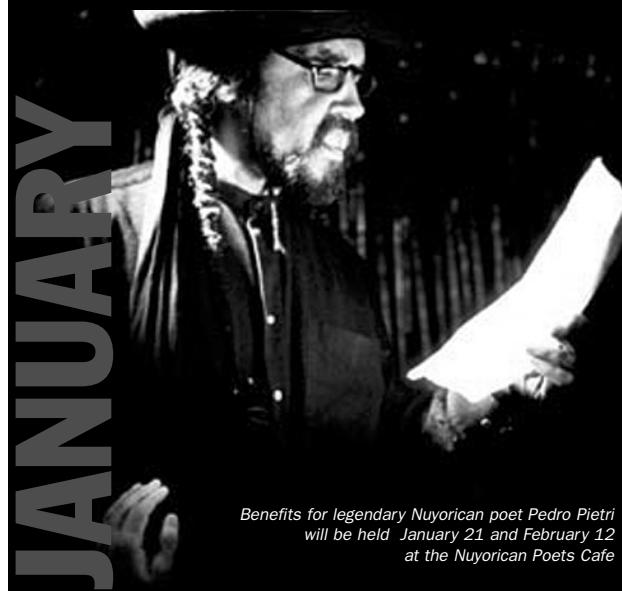
WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?
The IMC has an open door. You can write for The Indypendent, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help run the office. As an organization relying entirely on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Chris Anderson, Silvia Arana, Bennett Baumer, Jed Brandt, Mike Burke, Sina Choi, Ellen Davidson, Ryan Dunsmuir, Miguel Erb, Alley Ernst, Chris Fleisher, Mike Flugennock, Neela Ghoshal, A.K. Gupta, Vanessa Hradsky, Ashley Kidd, Alicia Kubista, Greg Jocz, Matthew Leonard, Janelle Lewis, F. Timothy Martin, Yoni Mishal, Lydia Neri, Ana Nogueira, Tracy Norton, Lina Pallotta, Donald Paneth, Mark Pickens, Frank Reynoso, Nandor Sala, Jessica Stein, Catriona Stuart, Daniel Taspisin, John Tarleton, Michael Ulrich, Michael Willkerson, Mike Wu

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



JANUARY

Benefits for legendary Nuyorican poet Pedro Pietri will be held January 21 and February 12 at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe

THE INDYPENDENT

has open meetings every Tuesday, 7 pm at 34 E. 29 St., 2nd floor.

To submit events for the calendar, call (212) 684-8112.

FRI JAN 16

7pm
"The Forbidden Stories of Marta Venerandaby and Sonia Rivera" / "Valdes: 6 NYC Immigrant's Tales"; Bluestockings 172 Allen St.

SAT JAN 17

4pm
Menstrual activism workshop;
Jane Doe books 93 Montrose Ave, Williamsburg, BK. 917-644-5141, 347-423-8156 (\$5 suggested donation)

SUN JAN 18

2pm
Surveillance Camera Walking Tour Chelsea; NE 8th Ave & 14 St. 212-561-

0106, www.notbored.org

MON JAN 19 (MLK DAY)

7pm
"The Party's Over." Documentary of the 2000 presidential elections and the protests that followed; 21 Ave C & 2nd St.

TUE JAN 20

7pm
No RNC Clearinghouse Meeting; Judson Church on Washington Square South.

WED JAN 21

7pm
Emergency Poetry, Music & Dance Fundraisers for El Reverendo Pedro Pietri The Nuyorican Poets Cafe 236 E 3rd St. (btwn Ave B & C)

7pm
"How to Green Ground Zero: Alternative Power in Urban Spaces"; 25 Broad St. RSVP neil@green-groundzero.org
7pm
Best Lesbian Erotica 2004;

Lisa Archer, Rachel Bussel, Elspeth Potter, Kyle Walker, Jeni Wright; Bluestockings 172 Allen St.

7-9pm
Marcus Garvey, a cultural & educational performance. Wine and snacks; 12 Fulton St.
\$3 Sugg. donation.

7:30pm
"Post-Soul Nation: The Triumphant & Tragic 80's as Experienced by African-Americans"; Barnes and Noble; 4 Astor Place

THU JAN 22

10am-6pm
Chinese Lunar New Year Lion & Dragon Dances; Canal / Broadway.

11am
Chinese New Year Celebration; Brooklyn Public Library, Youth Wing, Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn.

SUN 25

1-3pm
Chinese Lunar New Year Parade; Mott & Mulberry St.

2pm
Surveillance Camera Walking Tour; 5th Ave; NE 5th Ave & 42nd St. 212-561-0106, www.notbored.org

MON 26

4:30pm
Poetry writing workshop 425 6th Ave

7pm
Tuvan throat singing workshop 211 E 5th St

7pm
Visions of Earth: Winter procession to celebrate gardens, community, & earth 638 E 6th St to Ave C & 9th St

TUE 27

7pm
"Eco Crystal" meditation workshop; 211 E 5th St

SAT 31

11am
"Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory"; Public Library, 2nd fl Auditorium, Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sundays

1pm
Food not Bombs cooks at ABC no r/o. Serves vegetarian food in Tompkins Square Park SW 3:30ish

3:5pm
Solidarity w/ Palestine rally; 14th St & Broadway

6pm
"Books Through Bars," answer letters, 7pm mail books to prisoners. ABC no r/o; 156 Rivington St 2nd fl

7 pm
The Indypendent's winter film series. Movies TBA; 34 E. 29 St., 2nd fl. 212-684-8112

Mondays

6:10pm
Public speakout w/ No Police State Union Sq

Tuesdays

4:30pm
Poetry writing workshop New York Library; 425 6th Ave

Wednesdays

12:30-1:30pm
Ground Zero witness for peace and justice vigil Church St between Fulton & Vesey

6-8pm

"Hats not Bombs: Knitting Circle for All Skill Levels" Jane Doe books 93 Montrose, Brooklyn. 18-599-6557

Thursdays

5:30-6:30pm
Women in Black for Palestine 14th St & Broadway

6-10pm

Public speakout w/ No Police State; Union sq

Fridays

10pm
"Yoga For Those Who Serve Others With Care" 7W 24th St.

1pm

Food not Bombs cooks at ABC no r/o. Serves vegetarian food in Tompkins Square Park SW 3:30ish

6pm
Art performance & film Garden @ 386 E Houston

6:30pm

Food not Bombs dinner & movie Jane Doe books, 93 Montrose, Brooklyn. 718-599-6557

8pm

Movie Night 3 Jewels Cafe, 211 E 5th St., 212-475-6650

Saturdays

Urban outdoor walking tours of NYC's shores & parks; 212-352-9330, dave.lutz@tree-branch.com

1:20pm
"Wellness Saturday: Holistic Healing Workshop" Whole Foods Market, 250 7th Ave & 24th St.

3:5pm
Solidarity with Palestine rally 14th St. & Broadway

6pm

Art Performance & film; Garden @ 386 E. Houston

LETTERS

Send your letters to imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org • 34 E. 29th Street, 2nd floor, NY, NY 10016

THE INDY LET ME DOWN

Your last issue failed to live up to your vision of, "radical, accurate, and passionate tellings of truth."

I wrote a piece for the Revolutionary Worker (RW) newspaper on Matthew Hall's death. You printed an edited version of it without permission, without citing the RW, and removed its political heart, misrepresenting Matthew. Then you misleadingly included my byline as though I were responsible for this.

For years, Matthew poured his heart into Refuse & Resist!, Not In Our Name, and the October 22 Coalition. His main group was the Zulu Nation, but along with the Black Panthers and Mumia Abu-Jamal, those were some of the particular groups and people he was inspired by and you edited most of them out. Doing this, you distorted the meaning and content, and misrepresented Matthew's life and what he stood for.

Comparing both articles, the impression is that it was edited because of political differences. Must a writer hide their revolutionary

perspective to be in the Indypendent?

I would love to develop a strong working relationship with you and for you to publish diverse writers, strengthening independent media. But by what standards? Radical journalists must work without the manipulative, dishonest methods of the corporate media – including not censoring radical politics. You should at least involve writers in your editing process, respecting the integrity of their work. As a writer for the RW, I often interview and

write about people whose views vary greatly from mine. But we never change the meaning of their words, distorting the content.

The Indypendent needs to challenge itself to more live up to its vision mentioned above. People need the truth to change the world and we are living in times when that is becoming more precious and hard to find. This means radical journalists must take our responsibilities even more seriously.

My original article is at: www.rw.org/web-new

CORRECTIONS, ISSUE 42:

Mark Engler's article "Free Trade on the Rocks" originally appeared on democracyuprising.com. Jed Brandt's article "APOC Meets the Man" incorrectly identified Ricky Manzanala. Ricky is "transgendered," not "transexual."

Suzi Subway's review of "A New World In Our Hearts," incorrectly listed the email address for the Freedom Road Socialist Organization website. They can be reached at freedomroad.org

NEXT ISSUE HITS THE STANDS: FEB 3

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: JAN 29

NET LOSS: FORT GREENE CALLS FOUL ON RATNER'S ARENA

BY TRACY NORTON

Atlas Auto Service has operated in Fort Greene for 43 years, but co-owners Blaise and David Sarno, who inherited the shop from their father, may close their doors permanently if the city condemns the block on which they work. Their shop is just one of many local businesses that may be sacrificed for a proposed 19,000-seat basketball arena that would also displace hundreds of local residents.

Because of high property costs in the neighborhood, the only other option for the Sarno brothers would be to move far from their longstanding customer base. "It's not worth it," said Blaise. When asked what he would do for a living if forced to leave, Blaise jokingly replied, "I don't know, work as a hot dog vendor in the stadium, or maybe as a beer guy." He continued, "What can you do? That's the city getting over on you again."

Developer Bruce Ratner wants to net the New Jersey Nets, and his \$300 million bid for the professional basketball team leaves no doubt of just how serious he is about the acquisition. Should he succeed, Mr. Ratner has plans to "revitalize" downtown Brooklyn.

A huge arena to house the team is the centerpiece. Not to be overlooked in the whopping \$2.5 billion price tag is 4,500 residential units, 2.1 million square feet of office space and over 300,000 square feet of retail space. The train yards at Atlantic Avenue will be decked over to hold most of planned buildings, but some of the surrounding neighborhood will also be condemned.

Proponents of the deal include Gov. George Pataki (Ratner's Columbia law school classmate), Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz.

But opposition is gathering quickly too, and the use of eminent domain to condemn land for private use is a major point of contention. Ratner's claim that only about 100 people would be displaced by the project is being disputed by the Prospect Heights Action Coalition. The coalition estimates that the number of displaced neighbors is much closer to 850. In addition, about 500 jobs will be lost, half of which represent people who both live and work in the community.

The term "public use" – mentioned in the Fifth Amendment – and eminent domain laws enables the government to claim private land for uses such as roads, parks and police stations. In contrast, says coalition member Patti Hagan, "Mr. Ratner is not a public purpose, not a public necessity, just private gain, private greed. Illegal."

In recent years "public use" has warped into "public good," meaning government officials can condemn property if they deem it a benefit to the surrounding community. Yet, many residents see no "public good" in destroying homes and pushing out small business in order to help big business move in.

Mara White works at the Geb Hetep Wholistic Center on Flatbush, which is slated

to be destroyed by this plan. "This big conglomerate that's ready to come in here has no concern for the people of the community," she said, "and it's just to benefit [their] pockets. It's going to run out a lot of people who really are concerned about the community."

One of the many towers set to go up around the stadium will surpass the height of the landmark Williamsburg Bank building – currently the tallest building in Brooklyn – by more than 100 feet and many residents see the whole project as out of scale. "People want to live in human scale neighborhoods," said Patti Hagan, "[Skyscrapers] don't work, they're not safe and people don't want to live that way. They want to be able to know their neighbors, and for their kids to play in the yard."

The assiduous efforts of the Prospect Heights Action Coalition and community members are far from cresting. Banners will be raised on local businesses that Ratner and his partners want to tear down. A petition against the arena and what residents consider abuse of eminent domain laws has close to 5,000 signatures on it. In addition, the group plans to travel to Albany to lobby representatives in an effort to halt the deal.

Ratner has enlisted the skills of famed architect Frank Gehry, known for his design of the Guggenheim museum in Spain. The stadium layout would include a rooftop beer garden and glass walls facing the surrounding streets. Gehry has expressed excitement about the proposal because he has never had the opportunity, "to build a neighborhood from scratch in an urban setting."

Many residents take offense to that comment, myself included. Growing up in Fort Greene has allowed me to observe the remarkable process of grassroots urban development. Through the efforts of committed home and business owners not only a desirable community emerges, but also a viable place in Brooklyn's culture and economy. Abandoned brownstones have been renovated into warm family homes, and the mix of cultures settled here have spurred such an eclectic mix of restaurants and shops that it could



THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD? The Guerra family is worried they could lose the brownstone they've lived in for 20 years **PHOTO: TIM WOOD**

make the Lower East Side weep.

A stroll around the proposed arena site reveals a neighborhood that's thriving. Atlantic and Flatbush Avenues are home to everything from Middle Eastern food centers to local sports stores to trendy coffee shops. Prospect Heights, the neighborhood Ratner wants to rip down, has been growing steadily over the last decade. Appearing on Pacific Street every year are newly renovated loft buildings welcoming an influx of art lovers and small businesses. Where's the blight? The neighborhood wants to know.

"This whole neighborhood has done the things on its own that people in public positions generally say people should be busy doing," said David Sheets, who lives in a building on Dean street that the developer wants demolished, "and as soon as some fruition comes from it then the opportunity is there for one plugged-in developer to make a fortune – and Markowitz, Bloomberg and Pataki go right along with it – that's not governing, that's profiteering."

Mr. Sheets has lived in the neighborhood for 23 years and in the same place on Dean for the last six. Like others, he was infuriated by the fact that he first found out about the development from a local paper that showed a map of the site imposed over his block. While Borough President Markowitz has promised that the community would be involved in the project, he has yet to offer specifics on how this will happen.

City Councilwoman Letitia James, who represents Fort Greene, Clinton Hill and Prospect Heights, does want to see some development on the site. "I am not against

development. I just want responsible development," she said. For his part, while Ratner has said he is doing this for Brooklyn's benefit, he has also said that if he does not purchase the Nets, there will be no development.

Ratner has raised several other buildings at the Atlantic and Flatbush intersection. Still another Ratner-developed building in the same area houses a P.C. Richards & Sons where a community garden once stood. Another site, the Atlantic Center Mall, has suffered from revolving renters (Caldor's, Macy's, Sterns and Sports Authority have all abandoned the building), making its success questionable. The street work around the mall was paid for with \$4 million in taxpayer money. Still under construction across the street is yet another Ratner brainchild, a high-rise that will hold offices and chain stores like Target.

By labeling the area "blighted" the city will be able to use "Tax Increment Financing" to help Ratner with construction and maintenance costs. Officials will write bonds to underwrite the plan based on a prediction of the tax revenue (the increment) Ratner's project will create. If the money is generated, the bonds will slowly be paid off. Should revenues fall short, taxpayers will be forced to pick up Ratner's tab.

"You really can't do worse than a sports facility in terms of economic development," said Neil deMause, author of *Field of Schemes: How the Great Stadium Swindle Turns Public Money Into Private Profit*. As far as the idea of labeling the area "blighted"? "If it really were 'blighted,'" Mr. deMause pointed out, "they wouldn't even consider building such a large

WHEN BUSH COMES TO SHOVE... WHERE DO YOU TURN FOR NEWS?

Naomi Klein says *The Indypendent* "mixes the spirit of direct action with a searing critique of corporate power." Drawing upon the global network of Indymedia Centers, we let people speak for themselves – from the streets of Baghdad to the jungles of Colombia, the shantytowns of South Africa to the villages of East Timor. We look at those resisting the Pentagon and Wall Street reign of terror, from the fight at home for housing, quality education and civil liberties to the broader struggle against corporate globalization. Don't miss an issue – subscribe today!



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INDY LAUNCHES SPECIAL REPORTING WORKSHOP SERIES IN FEBRUARY

The *Indydependent* will hold an intensive, three-part reporting workshop series during February.

Award-winning community journalists from *The Indypendent* and several producers from Democracy Now! will be among the teachers. Limited positions available.

To receive an application, call 212-684-8112 or write us at 34 E. 29 St., 2nd Fl. N.Y., N.Y. 10016.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. SUPREME COURT SENDS MIXED MESSAGE ON POST- 9/11 DETENTION POLICY

In a blow to civil liberties, the U.S. Supreme Court refused on Jan. 12 to hear an appeal challenging secret arrests and detentions. Without comment, the top court allowed the Bush administration to keep secret the names and other basic details about hundreds of people questioned and detained or arrested after the September 11 attacks.

Nevertheless, the court has moved to hear challenges to other parts of the administration's policies, recently accepting cases challenging the status of so-called "dirty bomber" Jose Padilla and Yasser Hamdi, both held as "enemy combatants" in a South Carolina brig.

Meanwhile, the BBC reports that a leading British counter-terrorism expert expects the "war on terrorism" could last between "35 to 50 years."

NYC REP. CALLS FOR STATIONING CIA MEMBERS IN POLICE DEPTS.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) has introduced legislation in Congress known as the Joint Terrorism Task Force Enhancement Act of 2003 that would grant the CIA power to station officers inside local police departments and vice versa. The newly formed Campaign to Demilitarize the Police has launched an online campaign to oppose the bill.

CAPITALISM VS. CAPITALISTS

The International Monetary Fund is warning that the rising U.S. trade imbalance and national debt are threatening the financial stability of the entire world. Within a few years, servicing the debt could consume 40 percent of the nation's annual economic output. The report criticized President Bush's emphasis on "cutting taxes, boosting defense and security outlays."

2004 WORLD SOCIAL FORUM IN INDIA

From Jan. 16-21, the 2004 World Social Forum (WSF) will be held in Mumbai, India. Over the past several years, tensions have erupted with anarchists and other anti-authoritarians that protest what they call the "NGO-ization" of the event.

The WSF formed in opposition the corporate World Economic Forum (WEF) held every year in Davos, Switzerland. Anti-WEF protests have shaken Switzerland for the past half-decade; last year, the country was turned into an armed camp in preparation for the event.

Coverage at mumbai.indymedia.org

FARC LEADER CAPTURED IN ECUADOR

Colombian officials recently announced the capture of FARC leader Simon Trinidad (Ricardo Palmera) as he was reportedly seeking medical treatment in a middle class neighborhood in Quito, Ecuador. Colombian military and police officials cited the crucial support of the CIA in facilitating the arrest. Trinidad did not deny his identity, though his lawyer contended that Trinidad was never a commander of troops and never played an integral role in FARC leadership. FARC itself seconds Trinidad's claim, contending that he was only a negotiator in failed peace talks.

IRAQ

This is supposed to be the job of the filmmakers and the journalists: to tell the other side of the story. Most of them, needless to say, don't concern themselves with such things. In the United States, we rarely hear a word about the civilians; it's all laser-guided missiles and precision bombs. And when I think about all the people back home, especially in my home town of San Antonio, with its four military bases, wearing their "Operation Iraqi Freedom" T-shirts and "Support The Troops" pins, it makes me sick. Freedom in Iraq, at the moment, is a daily struggle for survival, and "support the troops" is a meaningless slogan.

THE AIR DEFENSE MINISTRY

Several days ago we filmed in the former Air Defense Ministry building. Once it was a colossal, palatial affair, with an Olympic-size swimming pool and marble walls. Now it is mostly a pile of rubble.

We were there to interview one of the families that have since moved into the abandoned space. There are at least 200 Iraqis living there now. Clotheslines criss-cross the former exercise plaza. Fences around dwellings are constructed from locker doors planted in the ground.

Spray painted on a wall it says "Bakery" (in Arabic, of course), with an arrow pointing to a small, improvised house. And there indeed, in what was formerly the parade ground of the ministry building, a family runs a bakery, daily making the round flatbread that Iraqis eat with every meal.

Our specific focus that morning was a group of boys that climbs a mountainous pile of debris every morning and digs out the useable bricks. The whole city was drowning in cold, thick fog when we arrived. Palm trees were barely visible hovering in the distance as two kids picked their way over burnt and blasted columns, twisted rebar, and mounds and mounds of crumbled rock and plaster.

They pulled out the intact bricks and loaded them into plastic-sheet sling while we filmed them. Then they hauled the bricks down to the mud path that used to be a street



ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL ULRICH

to their father, who cleaned them off and, with the kids' help, set about mortaring and arranging them into a wall of the house he is building for them to live in.

So, here at ground zero of American imperial dreams, some people are making a home for themselves out of the ruins of violence and terror.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

It was almost like the event from the previous day. I had gone with my friends to a party being thrown by three Italian women who work for Bridges to Baghdad, a human-rights group that has been working here for several years. We had just poured glasses of wine and were settling down to drink them when another explosion rumbled through the building we were in. This one was bigger than the previous day's – much bigger – and so, again, about half the people at the party grabbed cameras and hit the street.

We were among the first to arrive on the scene. A car bomb had detonated on a small street, destroying a posh restaurant on the corner and mangling every parked car on the

block. The street was literally on fire. It was utter carnage. I started filming, keeping both eyes open.

Iraqi police were running everywhere, and already people had set up a hose and were trying to put out the fires. At first, no one minded us filming, but then they started telling us to move back.

Someone pointed at the ground and waved me over. It was a human foot, severed from the rest of its body, lying in a pool of blood among pieces of blown-apart automobile. Maybe it was the driver of the car, I don't know.

Then the owner of the restaurant came out to give an interview and was swarmed with cameras and lights. I didn't figure I needed to hear anything, so I found the rest of my posse and we got in our car and left, skirting around an armored vehicle that was trying to make its way down the narrow avenue.

Later we heard a false report that the Baghdad chief of police had been killed, and 30 or so people injured. Nevertheless, the restaurant was frequented by other government officials and foreigners, so the resistance apparently still picks its targets well.

WHERE DO I GET MY COPY OF THE INDYPENDENT?

A FREE PAPER FOR FREE PEOPLE

LOWER EAST SIDE

ABC No Rio
156 Rivington

Bluestockings Books & Cafe
172 Allen

Lotus Cafe
Clinton & Stanton

EAST VILLAGE

May Day Books
155 First Ave.
(btwn. 9th & 10th)

Kim's Video
3rd Ave. & St. Marks Pl.

SOHO

Housing Works
126 Crosby St.

NOHO

Mercer St. Books
206 Mercer

TRIBECA

In The Black
King and Varick

GREENWICH VILLAGE

Film Forum
213 W. Houston

WEST VILLAGE

LGBT Center
213 W. 13th St.

UNION SQUARE

Revolution Books
9 W. 19th St.

CHELSEA

Chelsea Sq. Diner
23rd & 9th

HELL'S KITCHEN

Second Wave Laundrometer
55th & 9th Ave.

TIMES SQUARE

Chashama Theatre
135 W. 42 & B'Way

UPPER EAST SIDE

Hunter College
68th & Lex, USG Office

UPPER WEST SIDE

Labyrinth Books
112th St. near B'way

HARLEM

Riverside Church
490 Riverside Dr. at 120th

Strictly Roots Restaurant
123rd & Adam Clayton Powell Blvd.

WOODSIDE

Queens Pride House
6703 Woodside Ave.

WASHINGTON HEIGHTS

Monkey Business
187th & Ft. Washington Ave.

BUSHWICK

Make the Road by Walking
301 Grove St.

WILLIAMSBURG

Clovis Books
N. 4th St. & Bedford Ave.

Spoonball & Sugartown Books

218 Bedford Ave.

PARK SLOPE

Community Book Store
7th & Carroll Sts.

Tea Lounge
7th Ave.

Park Slope Food Co-op
782 Union St.

COBBLE HILL

Tripoli Restaurant
Atlantic & Clinton

DOWNTOWN B'KLYN

Soft Skull Press
7 Bond St. & State

FORT GREENE

Pratt Area Community Council
201 DeKalb Ave

STATEN ISLAND

Muddy Cup Coffee House
388 Van Duzen

JERSEY CITY

Five Corners Branch Library
off Journal Square

BY RAMOR RYAN

OVENTIC, CHIAPAS — On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the Zapatista uprising that began on Jan. 1, 1994, the indigenous rebels had a surprise for the thousands of supporters who gathered here to pay homage — they did nothing.

No spectacular celebration, no mass march upon San Cristobal, no bold new political initiatives and certainly no new armed uprising. Instead, there were a series of subdued celebrations in each of the five Zapatista "Caracole" centers, attended modestly by rank and file and somewhat more generously by national and international supporters.

Here in the Zapatista highlands headquarters of Oventic, some 800 people danced the night away caked in mud, cloaked in fog. I recalled another New Years Eve here in this very area some years ago and that night there were several thousand rebels out in force. Tonight's demure festivities (midnight passes without much ado), the lackluster message read out by an unidentified masked rebel and the empty space enveloping the gathering, prompts some to ask, "Where have the Zapatistas gone?"

President Fox claims he has ended the conflict and brought peace to Chiapas, and mainstream political analysts predict an end to Zapatismo. "1994 – 2004: The great illusion, the great frustration," reads the cover of this week's *Proceso*, Mexico's prestigious political weekly. Its contention, that the Zapatista uprising did not deliver its promises and has brought little but more misery upon the base communities, is gaining currency. That the Zapatistas are a spent force, have no answer to the new challenges of the 21st century, are losing ground in the communities, and that Marcos has gone mad is all grist to the mill among not only the usual suspects, but also some sympathizers.



EMBATTLED AUTONOMY: Campesino combatants gather in Oventic.
PHOTOS: FRED ASKEW

SMALL VICTORIES & LONG STRUGGLES

"To still be here is a victory," said a Zapatista veteran at Oventic. "Well, a small victory."

Encircled by the Mexican Army and threatened by paramilitaries, such small victories are quite an achievement. When one considers the fate of the resistance movements in nearby Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua in the 1980s — the predecessors of the EZLN — then maybe indeed the victory is to still be here, and not to have been massacred.

A young Zapatista read out the end of year message in Oventic. It did not address the momentous achievements of 10 years of Zapatista resistance but instead the concrete gains of the past year — the consolidation of the autonomous municipalities, the creation of the five Caracoles (community centers) and the new "Juntas of Good Government."

"We have been able to advance in our struggle, in our different tasks. During 2003 we made important gains," the masked Zapatista read. "We ask that the compañeros and compañeras in each region and each municipality, simply, continue working..."

No rhapsodic communiqués of love and rage, no poetic convocations to global revolt, none of the signature tunes of

Subcommandante Marcos, just the nuts and bolts of local resistance, of building radical communities and autonomy in action.

FROM NATIONAL LIBERATION TO LOCAL AUTONOMY

"You are in Zapatista territory. Here the people rule and the government obeys," reads the rough sign as you enter the "Resistance and Rebellion for Humanity" Zapatista Caracole of Oventic. And that is the message after 10 years.

For this the dead died. Those who fell in the marketplace of Ocósingo and Rancho Nuevo in '94, or the environs of El Bosque in '98, and of course, those massacred in Acteal. For this the thousands of indigenous people of the canyons and highlands and jungle of Chiapas struggle to rule themselves and to resist the attempts of government encroachment over the sovereignty of the people, their land and their resources.

What began 10 years ago ostensibly as an old school struggle for national liberation ("We give our military forces, the EZLN, the following orders: Advance to the Capital of the country, overcoming the Mexican Federal Army" — Declaration of War,

December 31, 1993) became the long struggle for local autonomy, for taking control of their day-to-day lives.

With or without the shadow of Marcos, the Zapatistas move forward in stealth and cunning, and the end of Zapatismo proclaimed by pundits may be only the end of Marcos and the more spectacular ventures, for now. And the fictitious peace proclaimed by Fox may be merely a prelude to a nonviolent revolutionary change of the structure of power in Chiapas that could reverberate further, nationally and internationally.

A FOGGY NIGHT IN OVENTIC

Fireworks pierced the murky night sky and the predominantly young crowd danced all night long. Despite the mud and the cold mountain air, the atmosphere was cheerful and there is something still very special about this low-key festival of resistance. This day last year 20,000 Zapatistas descended upon San Cristobal lighting huge bonfires and reminding people that they hadn't gone away. This year the Zapatistas felt no need for a big show. To be alive, a small victory, to be capable of joy and struggle.

"Only in a rebel existence," the masked youth reminds us, "Can we continue constructing our autonomy."

HAITI CELEBRATES SLAVE REVOLT ANNIVERSARY

LOCAL ELITE STILL SCRAPPING FOR POWER

By Kim Ives

PORT-AU-PRINCE — Tens of thousands of Haitians filled the streets around the National Palace on Jan. 1, 2004 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Haiti's independence.

A smaller celebration of about 7,000 took place later the same day in Gonaïves, the city where Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Haiti's first head of state, declared independence for the world's first black republic.

Despite threats of violence from the Washington-backed opposition and back-room pressure to dissuade them, many high-level foreign delegations attended the bicentennial ceremonies. France and the United States only dispatched their local ambassadors.

Festivities began the evening of Dec. 31, Haitians filled the streets in all corners of the capital to watch fireworks, listen to bands, and gather in large jubilant crowds.

Thousands more danced to *rara* street bands in the suburb of Tabarre, not far from Aristide's home. Another street party rocked the Caridad quarter of the capital, which, like many other neighborhoods, was festooned with tiny flags

and had newly painted murals of Haiti's revolutionary war heroes lining the avenue.

In Bon Repos, just north of the capital, several hundred people gathered around a makeshift roadside stage to listen to speeches by local leaders and music by local bands. As midnight struck, the mountainsides around capital erupted in dozens of firework displays. Stores and restaurants were open practically all night.

Ceremonies in front of the Palace began the next morning at about 8 a.m. when the presidential couple hoisted the Haitian bicolor. In their excitement, crowds collapsed the fence surrounding the Palace grounds as well as a wooden viewing platform constructed for the occasion.

"May the determination of these former slaves to forge a nation in a world hostile to their very existence inspire us to always continue to struggle for human dignity that is the sacred right of all people," Aristide declared in his speech, which outlined 21 accomplishments as well as projects "waiting for the 21 billion." He was referring to the \$21.7 billion in restitution that Haiti has formally demanded from former colonizer France.

The ceremony featured marching bands, flag displays, the sounding of conch shells (used by Haitian maroons) and the release of doves of peace.

Later that afternoon, Aristide flew to Gonaïves where he delivered a similar address underscoring that he intends to serve out his full five year term, which ends in 2006. The opposition wants him to step down to be replaced by a 27-member "Council of Wise Men," which would be unconstitutional.

Haitians overwhelmingly reject the opposition and their proposal. Like those in the capital and Gonaïves, crowds along the highway between the two cities greeted passing vehicles with an open hand, to symbolize that Aristide should serve out his full term.

In an attempt to disrupt the celebrations, the opposition held a march of several in the capital on Thursday afternoon, which deliberately veered off the agreed march route. When the police blocked their advance with tear-gas, the opposition demonstrators threw up barricades and went on a rampage through commercial and residential districts, smashing car windshields and storefronts, burning vehicles, throwing rocks and firing shots.

A similar assault was carried out in Gonaïves after ceremonies were successfully concluded. In the Dekawo neighborhood, opposition members hid behind the houses lining the southern exit route from the city to pelt departing buses of celebrants with rocks. One car had its back windows shot out.

A version of this article originally appeared in *Haiti Progres*. haiti-progres.com

FLASH BULBS & FINGERPRINTS

U.S. INSTITUTES TWO-TIER SYSTEM FOR INT'L TRAVELERS

BY BENNETT BAUMER

Travelers from Guyana, Tel-Aviv, and beyond trickled through the door into the JFK Airport arrival hall searching for familiar faces in the crowd. With balloons overhead and flowers in hand, teary-eyed family and friends welcomed their loved ones to the U.S.A. Behind the scenes, however, immigration and customs officials greeted travelers differently.

Along with answering the standard questions about the purpose of their trip, international visitors with a visa now must allow themselves to be fingerprinted and photographed under a new program, United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT). Fingerprints are taken using an inkless fingerprint scanner, and the process takes about 10-15 seconds.

Not everyone has to smile for the US-VISIT camera. Visitors from 27 countries, including Canada, Japan and the countries of Western Europe, are exempt since they can travel to the United States without a visa. This prompted critics to point out that the new regulations are confusing and discriminatory.

After the September 11 attacks, the Bush administration implemented the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, which called for thousands of Arabs and Muslims to register with the government. The administration claims that US-VISIT will replace the registration system, but the ACLU warns that the government is sending mixed signals.

"Contrary to assertions by the Homeland Security Department, the US-VISIT program is an addition to – not a substitute for – the notorious special registration program that singled out Arab and Muslim men because of their national origin and that continues to subject them to special and confusing requirements," Timothy Edgar, an ACLU Legislative Counsel, said in a press release.

At the arrival hall in JFK and around the city, folks expressed a nonchalant view about US-VISIT. Coming off a flight from Santo Domingo, an American of Dominican descent commented that he was a citizen and not fingerprinted, but there were delays in immigration because of the regulations.

Anas Umostafa, a Brooklyn shopkeeper, supported the regulations with some skepticism. "They're (the government) not doing this because we're Muslim or Arab. At least we hope they're not," the shopkeeper said.

The response abroad was not so indifferent. In Brazil, a judge ordered that every American entering the country must be fingerprinted and photographed. Both the mayor of Rio de Janeiro, a major tourist destination, and the U.S. embassy in Brazil expressed regret at the judge's decision, with the embassy stating that it was upset with the "maneuver that new procedures were implemented."

The effectiveness of US-VISIT is not yet clear. The database may be too large to allow for an effective search, and anti-U.S. militants could just as easily slip into the country through one of the exempted countries. It is estimated that well over 20 million people will visit the United States this year and have their photo and fingerprints taken.

Administration officials are stressing the anti-terrorism aspects of the program. "The terrorists who attacked us on September 11 two years ago, some of them were 'overstays,'" Asa Hutchinson, Homeland Security's Undersecretary of Border Security, said. "And so by being able to identify those who overstayed their visas in and of itself helps us to identify those who may be terrorists."

But it appears US-VISIT may have as much to do with immigration as it does with terrorism. Before US-VISIT, authorities did not have the capability to track the movement of visitors. Now the government will know when a visitor overstays their visa – possibly leading to deportation and being barred from re-entering the country. Immigrants may be able to cross into the United States under US-VISIT's nose via Mexico, and this may fuel migration from other countries through the southern border.



IN THE BROI

THREE TEENS STRUGGLE AS FOREIGNERS IN THE

BY MEREDITH MANDELL

They are typical American teenagers. Jose, 16, skateboards with friends, idolizes the rapper Nas and works on his college applications. Ubaldo, 14, loves playing Japanese video games, enjoys writing book reports and makes frequent trips to the orthodontist.

Enoe, 14, dons a fashionable North Face winter jacket, talks on the phone with friends and takes care of her family's turtle and cat – while dreaming of becoming a veterinarian. But as far as immigration officials are concerned the three teenagers are lawbreakers. Their parents came here illegally from Mexico when the three were only babies. Now, in their teens, they live with the consequences.

"I worry about being nothing, about not mattering," Jose said.

Enoe simply wonders, "How am I gonna find a job?"

The three have spent virtually their entire lives in the Bronx and their undocumented status, for a cluster of reasons, is likely to keep them in the same marginal existence as their parents.

The lack of educational opportunities, legal protection and social services for undocumented immigrants is of particular concern to the Mexican community, one of the city's fastest-growing immigrant populations.

According to Census 2000, there are 186,872 Mexicans in New York City.

They are the third largest Latino group behind Dominicans and Puerto Ricans.

However, according to a recent Columbia University study, between 20 and 40 percent of the Mexican immigrants are illegal. The study also said that Mexicans have one of the lowest household incomes in the city, with one-third of them living below the federal poverty line in 1999.

Honor Student Struggles

It is painful for children who grow up with intense ambitions and yet must cope with the reality that they are part of society's underclass.

Jose is a senior at Roosevelt High School who does not want to become another statistic. He excels in school. His class rank is 24th out of 150 students. He takes advanced placement classes, he has scored perfect grades in his math class and maintains a "B" average.

He has passed all his Regents examinations, a big achievement for a student in a school where less than a quarter of the students graduate in four years.

Jose said he genuinely loves to learn. He prefers the History Channel to MTV, and is currently reading a philosophy book titled *Paradox of the Living Dead*. It is for this reason, his friends affectionately call him the "mean nerd." He is on the fencing team, swim team, and a leader in JROTC.

A stack of college applications sits on his chair at a desk area in his parents'

bedroom. Bates, NYU and Fordham have all sent letters wooing him.

However, Jose cannot get financial aid to college because of his undocumented status. In order to fill out the federal financial aid application, high school students must have a Social Security number, which illegal immigrants cannot obtain. He cannot even join the Army to pay for college unless he is a resident with a green card. As a result he will be forced to work in a restaurant, furniture-moving service or factory – places that might hire illegal immigrants.

When his parents decided to move to New York permanently in 1988, they had come to make money and to reunite with his father's uncles who were already living here, Jose said. His parents simply crawled under a fence to cross the border from Tijuana, Mexico, into California. His mother Catalina, 57, foresaw the hardships their family might face, but did not think they would last.

Marc Pascente, dean of students at Belmont Prep, one of the five smaller schools that compose the Roosevelt High School campus, estimates that 25 percent of the students at Roosevelt are undocumented.

Guidance counselors have simply not been able to figure out a way to get around the citizenship requirement so that they may receive financial aid, Pascente said.

For Jose and other undocumented



UBALDO AND HIS MOTHER
PHOTO: Lina Pallotta

and Dick Durbin (D-IL) that has been approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill would permit undocumented immigrants who have a high school diploma and arrived in the country before they were 15 years old to apply for a green card. It would also allow them to apply for federal aid for higher education.

Ubaldo Stands By His Father

In October, Ubaldo and a group of protesters yelled "Justice for workers!" and "Pelham Bay doesn't pay!" in front of the Pelham Bay diner on Gun Hill Road in the Bronx. The restaurant had refused to pay his father and other workers the minimum wage. His father had asked for a raise from the \$250 a week he was making. Working 60 hours a week, he made just a little more than \$4.15 an hour. For Ubaldo, it was important to stand against the unjust treatment his father and other workers had received.

Although the protest raised awareness of the allegations against the restaurant, it was a calculated risk for Ubaldo and his family. When police eventually came to break up the protest, Ubaldo feared they might take his father away. The experience was a chilling reminder that Ubaldo's undocumented life can be filled with uncertainty and fear.

In Mexico, Ubaldo's father worked for Coca-Cola as a bottle distributor, but it was a dangerous job — thieves would try to steal bottles — and he made little money. So his father quit his job and set out for the United States. He moved to New Jersey and got a job in a restaurant in 1987, trying to save money to send back to his family in Mexico. In 1990, when Ubaldo was just 2 years old, his mother and three sisters took turns carrying him across the border from Mexico to Arizona on foot, they then took a plane from Phoenix to New York, where they were reunited with his father.

Now Ubaldo lives with his father, mother, and older sister in a small two-bedroom apartment in the South Bronx. By U.S. standards, Ubaldo's family lives in poverty, and yet they still feel they are better off than they would be in Mexico.

Yearning For Her Own Space

Enoe, Ubaldo's cousin, said that her mother only made five pesos a day (less than \$1) working in the bean fields of a "puebla," or a small village, in Mexico. Her mother and father, carrying Enoe who was six months old, walked across the border into Arizona carrying six-month-old Enoe, with her cousin's family.

However, 13 years later there is no

sign of upward mobility. Enoe lives with 12 relatives in a two-room Bronx apartment. She has two younger brothers and two younger sisters. They, along with their parents sleep in one bedroom. Her aunt's family, with four children, lives in the other bedroom.

When Enoe wants to do her homework, she sits on her parents' bed while her younger brother and sister run around the room, shrieking and giggling as they play cat-and-mouse games. When her youngest sister cries, she stops and comforts her. She helps her brother with his English homework.

As a result of family duties, Enoe does not take part in any after-school activity at high school; recently, she missed a school dance because she had to baby sit. Although her parents bought her a new computer for Christmas and a stylish winter jacket, they are unable to give her the privacy she wants.

Enoe's family situation is typical among undocumented Mexican immigrants. "They don't have breathing room," said George Regan, program director at Tepeyac, a non-profit Mexican advocacy group in Manhattan. In many cases, undocumented immigrants live in temporary situations with the intention of going back to Mexico eventually, which creates instability in the lives of their children, Regan said. "You're living with your bags packed."

Teenagers also have the added pressure of being "in the know" because many times their parents do not speak English or understand American customs. Whether it is Jose explaining to the barber how to cut his father's hair or Ubaldo translating at parent-teacher conferences or Enoe deciphering a hospital bill for her mother, these teenagers all have that responsibility.

Although Executive Order 41, signed by Mayor Bloomberg in September, prohibits reporting undocumented immigrants to immigration officials, advocates say the order is ineffective.

When undocumented teenagers or their parents want to find out about social services such as domestic violence counseling, public assistance for medical care or something less pressing but still important — such as after-school tutoring at school, they may be more reluctant and less likely to actually get the help they need.

"Your anxieties, fears and emotions have to be controlled — you don't want to be exposed," Roman, a high school counselor who has guided undocumented immigrants, said. "You gotta walk around the corners."



ONE FOR THE GOOD GUYS: Danmar workers finally bring home the bacon. PHOTO: Amelia D'Entrone

OVERDUE OVERTIME

DANMAR WORKERS VICTORIOUS IN FIGHT FOR WITHHELD PAY AFTER 18-MONTH BATTLE WITH BROOKLYN CLOTHING FACTORY

In mid-December, 175 workers won \$410,000 in back pay at the Danmar Finishing clothing factory, located at 456 Johnson Ave. in Brooklyn. The owners of the factory had been stealing their overtime pay for many years. Under labor law, workers must be paid time-and-a-half for all hours worked over 40 in a work week.

"We were not fighting for the money. We were fighting for justice. The owners told us we had no right to speak up because we didn't have papers. They would insult us," Blanca, one of the former Danmar employees, said at a press conference in front of the factory on Dec. 18.

Nieves Padilla, the organizer of Workers in Action, explained, "We started this campaign against Danmar over three years ago. It took us 18 months to get the Department of Labor to take this case. That was our first victory, which we won through our protests and with the help of Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez. It was a long and difficult campaign, but we had truth on our side and it finally came out. Se pude."

While Workers in Action has won back pay for workers in many cases, Danmar was its largest monetary victory to date. Other ongoing campaigns include one at the Minimax department store on Bushwick's Knickerbocker Avenue shopping strip. Six women have come forward to sue the store for years of unpaid overtime and minimum wage, stating that they sometimes worked as much as 80 hours per week and could be fired after years of work for something as minor as missing work to tend to a sick child.

Organizational campaigns like the ones at the Danmar factory and the Minimax department store reach out to other workers in the community, educate them about their rights, and show them that they too can organize and fight back. "I believe the best pressure on the bosses is when it is organizational," not legal, Padilla said.

Workers in Action, a project organized by Make the Road by Walking (which I work with), uses a variety of tactics, from letter writing and lawsuits to noisy protests to help workers who have been the victims of unscrupulous employers. We have pressured various unions to deal with worker grievances. Workers in Action is also involved with a campaign to raise the New York minimum wage and is planning to campaign for the enforcement of criminal penalties for non-payment of wages under New York state law.

Back at Danmar, Cristina, one of the 13 employees who will be receiving back pay, told reporters, "I am happy because the truth has finally come out, and the truth is I was exploited for many years here in this factory, and I call on workers to have no fear of speaking the truth. We believe we all deserve a fair wage, and not just us but also all of those still inside the factory."

-BERT PICARD

NX EIR OWN LAND

teenagers, President Bush's recent proposal to establish a guest worker program allowing undocumented immigrants to apply for three-year guest worker visas is not a permanent solution. For some, the president's plan seems like just another scheme to gain critical Hispanic votes for the upcoming election.

However, with nation's attention focused on immigration policy, there is hope that Congress will pass the Federal Development and Education for Alien Minors Act, nicknamed DREAM, a bill sponsored by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT),

COME HERE. WORK HARD. PAY TAXES. GO HOME.

That's George W. Bush's message according to critics of the president's long-awaited immigration reform proposal that was unveiled on Jan. 7.

Under the proposal, immigrants who have a "willing employer" would be able to apply for a three-year guest

worker permit that could be renewed one time only for another three years. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney says the plan would create a "permanent legal underclass" of underpaid workers. Local immigrant leaders are denouncing Bush's proposal as an election year ploy to

win Hispanic votes in key swing states.

"It was an empty piñata," said Guillermo Chacon, spokesperson for the Salvadoran American National Network. "This is not what our communities were looking for."

Immigrant groups also vow to continue fighting for

legal reforms that would put America's 8 million undocumented immigrants on the path to full citizenship.

"It's not a gift," said Vicente Mayorga of the United Front of Ecuadorian Immigrants. "We've worked hard for it."

-John Tarleton

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ NO PROBABLE CAUSE IN SEATTLE WTO ARRESTS

More than four years after the "Battle of Seattle," a judge ruled that Seattle police had no probable cause when they arrested 157 people at the 1999 WTO protest. Trial Lawyers for Public Justice, who represent the 157 arrestees, claim in court documents that police forced hundreds of protesters down a street were a mass arrest ensued without distinction between protesters and onlookers. While many of those arrested during the WTO talks were picked up in a "no protest zone," the 157 arrested outside of the zone are the focus of a class action suit arguing that that a premeditated policy of arrests violated protesters' First and Fourth Amendment rights. Since Seattle, planned preemptive arrest has become the common policy of police forces patrolling "anti-globalization" protests.

■ CLARK MAKES "MATERIAL" PROGRESS

While his rivals—including Howard Dean, John Kerry, and John Edwards—continue to rack up heavyweight political endorsements, Gen. Wesley Clark can finally point to one of his own—pop superstar Madonna. On her website, the Material Girl notes that while she's "looked at all the Democratic candidates," she is supporting Clark because "in him I see the qualifications, character and vision that we so desperately need." Madonna also repeatedly describes Clark as "smart and good." No word yet on whether Britney Spears plans to make an endorsement this primary season.

■ HOW NOT TO PAY OVERTIME

The U.S. Labor Department has released guidelines to employers suggesting ways they can cut labor costs, angering workers and legislators on both sides of the political spectrum. The government helpfully suggests either cutting hourly wages and adding overtime to a workers base salary, or raising wages to \$22,100, disqualifying workers from earning overtime. The Labor Department also asserts that the one-time rule change on overtime does not violate labor law, as some unions contend. "Unless you have a contract, there is no legal rule ... prohibiting an employer from either raising your salary or cutting your salary," said Tammy McCutchen, a department official. Unions estimate that as many as 8 million workers could be stripped of overtime pay under the new guidelines.

■ BUSH WAGES WAR AGAINST THE WRITTEN WORD

Farmers Almanac readers beware. The FBI recently issued an intelligence bulletin urging agents to be on the look out for people carrying almanacs. The FBI wrote "terrorist operatives may rely on almanacs to assist with target selection and pre-operational planning."

And it is not only almanacs. Shortly after Sept. 11 a Philadelphia man named Neil Godfrey was barred from boarding a United Airlines flight because he was carrying a copy of the Nation and Edward Abbey's "Hayduke Lives!" which features an illustration of a man holding several sticks of dynamite.

And don't forget those dangerous poets. Last February First Lady Laura Bush canceled a White House poetry symposium because she was concerned some of the poets may read poems criticizing the imminent invasion of Iraq.

BY CAROLYN SZCZEPANSKI

On Dec. 30, 2003, one week after a cow in Washington State tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a list of additional safeguards to bolster U.S. protection systems against the disease.

Within hours, the American Meat Institute publicly applauded the measures. A day later, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) passed a unanimous resolution in support of the changes. However, while meat industry officials embraced the new regulations, consumer safety groups fear that the measures don't go far enough to protect public health.

The first policy revision eliminates "downer" cattle—cows that are unable to walk when they arrive at the slaughter facility—from the human food supply. While USDA touted the move as eliminating a significant threat, Michelle Peterson, spokeswoman for NCBA, said downer cattle only accounted for approximately 200,000, or .0005 per cent, of the 35.7 million cattle slaughtered in 2003.

Because BSE has an incubation period of up to eight years in cattle, USDA spokesman Jim Rogers said that it is certainly possible that outwardly healthy cattle could be infected.

Another USDA revision prohibits "specified risk material, including skull, brain, trigeminal ganglia, eyes, vertebral column, spinal cord and dorsal root ganglia of cows over 30 months of age" from entering the human food supply. Such bone and central nervous system tissues are the main source of BSE transmission.

However, as the Center for Science in the Public Interest pointed out, cows younger than 24 months have been diagnosed with BSE. Despite cases in Japan where cows died of BSE after only 21 months, Rogers said, "Our science is saying 30 months."

Other USDA changes seem to adhere simply to common sense or current law.

For instance, new "product holding" measures require that inspectors do not declare cattle BSE-free until the cows have, in fact, tested

MADCOW:



WHAT A DOWNER

negative for the disease. Because test results are often unavailable for several weeks, previous policy allowed inspectors to simply mark cattle "inspected and passed" before test results confirmed their health. Instead of a complicated product holding procedure, Michael Hansen, senior research associate with the Consumers Union, said there are more efficient means of eliminating potentially diseased cattle.

"USDA is using an old-fashioned and very slow method to test for mad cow disease," Hansen said. "Europe and Japan are using testing methods that provide results within hours. We're glad USDA will hold back any animals that are being tested until the results are in, but it would be much better if they used the quick tests."

Regulations regarding Advanced Meat Recovery (AMR) also disappointed consumer groups, seeming to clarify, rather than change, current law. AMR, an industrial technology that removes muscle from the bone of beef carcasses under high pressure, recovers an additional ten pounds of meat per carcass but also risks incorporating bone material into the product. Under new regulations, any product tainted with such tissue would be prohibited from carrying a "meat" label.

But, according to Steven Cohen, spokesman for the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, there is nothing new about this AMR guideline.

"Central nervous system tissue is never allowed in any meat and would be a misbranding issue under current regulations," Cohen said. "We have a very vigorous regulatory system that tests for this tissue from AMR and if we find it the product is either recalled or destroyed."

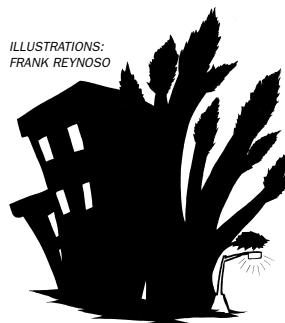
However, a 2002 report from the General Accounting Office (GAO) strongly criticized the rigor of agency testing. The GAO cited FDA data that showed, between 1997 and 2001, only 63 beef samples processed by AMR nationwide were tested and nearly 20 percent tested positive for central nervous system tissue. The GAO report further reported that, "when its tests found central nervous tissue in samples, USDA did not track to ensure that the processing plants relabeled the contaminated meat products as something other than meat."

Such a track record led Caroline Smith DeWaal, food safety director for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, to suggest that "USDA's announcement on AMR meat doesn't go nearly far enough to protect consumers."

While the changes are a step in the right direction, consumer groups said the most obvious avenue for combating the spread of BSE—increasing the number of cattle tested—was glaringly absent from the USDA's response. For instance, the Consumers Union emphasized that Japan tests every cut of meat bound for the human food supply and European nations test one cow out of every four slaughtered. But over the past 13 years, the U.S. has tested only 57,000 cattle, of 390 million slaughtered.

Because there had been no previous record of BSE in the U.S., Rogers said that level of testing was actually higher than international standards mandate. "Now that we have our first positive case of BSE, we're beginning an evaluation of our level of testing," he said.

But without any specific testing plan or target numbers, consumer groups worry that the most fundamental component for combating the disease hasn't been adequately addressed.



AVOIDING A STEAK THROUGH YO' HEART

BY A.K. GUPTA

So if reading *Fast Food Nation* and its Jungle-like depictions of the Midwestern meatpacking industry didn't put you off burgers, maybe the thought of mad-cow prions boring holes in brains will.

If you live in New York City, you're in luck. No other city in the world offers such a vast variety of cuisines, including vegetarian and vegan. Many are familiar to the no-meat-eating crowd, such as Chinatown's **House of Vegetarian** or NYU-area favorite **Dojo's** (which does serve burgers, though I've never seen anyone order one there). Explore the city and you will find a world of gastronomic delights. The following are a few of my favorites.

Perhaps the best deal in downtown Manhattan can be found at **Viet-Nam Banh Mi So**. Located at 369 Broome, this nondescript deli offers an utterly delicious sandwich for just \$2—a baguette spread with homemade mayonnaise piled with carrots, radishes, cucumber, cilantro and spices. If you're feeling in the mood for something piscine, walk north around the corner to **Cafe El Portal**, located on Elizabeth, for some yummy fish tacos. It's a skip and a jump from there to **Yonah Schimmel's** knishes, located on Houston near Second Ave. They're big and rich, but truth be told, not quite as tasty as **Mrs. Stahl's** knishes in Brighton Beach.

Next up is **Tiengarden** on Allen St., which offers inventive vegan Buddhist fare (and is next door to Bluestockings, a great independ-

ent bookstore). Push further east through the throngs of tourists and scenesters and you'll come to **Mamas**, on Third St. near Ave. B, where you can gorge on a variety of appealing vegetable side dishes for less than \$10.

Avoid Sixth Street, also known as India row, the food is almost universally abysmal. A better bet is to sit down at **Madras Cafe** on Second Ave. near Fifth St., which dishes out appetizing (and non-greasy) South and North Indian fare.

Further up Second, past Seventh St. is an old standby, **B+H Dairy**. Get a bowl of filling soup and two slices of pillow-y challah bread for just \$3.25 (a friend swears **Stage** across the street is even better). **Angelica's** is a real find, putting to rest the canard that vegan fare is all wheat germ and alfalfa sprouts, with dazzling vegetable-based specials every night. And if you're in Harlem, don't miss **Strictly Roots** on Seventh Ave. near 123rd St., where they don't serve it if it walks, swims, flies or crawls.

For Brooklynites, visit **Sahadi's** or **Oriental Pastry and Grocery** on Atlantic Ave. for some of the best hummus in the city and pick up satisfying phyllo pies and fresh pita bread at **Damascus Bakery**. A brisk walk to 19 Old Fulton St. (under the Brooklyn Bridge) will spark your appetite for some tasty pizza at **Patsy Grimaldi's**. But the city's best pie, in my opinion, is at **Totonno's** on 1524 Neptune Ave. in Coney Island.

If you're still intent on tempting fate with infected beef at least avoid the dessicated meat pucks hurled over the fast-food counter by surly nose-picking teenagers. Check out **Blue 9** on Third Avenue near 12th St. for mouthwatering burgers or **BB Sandwich Bar** on 120 W. Third St. near Sixth Ave. for its Philly cheesesteak interpretation (the only item on the menu). Or you could just schedule yourself an instant coronary event by tackling a mountain of luscious, spicy pashtami at **Katz's** deli on Houston and Ludlow.

RADIO SHOWDOWN

CANDIDATES VIE FOR CONTROL OF TROUBLED STATION IN UNPRECEDENTED ELECTION FOR LISTENER ADVISORY BOARD

By CHRIS ANDERSON

With a looming financial crisis as a backdrop, WBAI 99.5-FM will begin the year by conducting a path-breaking experiment in media democracy. For the first time ever, members in each of the Pacifica network's five signal areas will elect representatives to Local Station Boards (LSB) that oversee the management of the five stations.

More than 71 candidates are vying for 24 seats on the WBAI board, which will serve as the station's primary decision-making body.

"No other media outlet," station manager Don Rojas recently told the New York Times, "gives their listeners or viewers or readers the ability to vote the governing structure."

But despite the democratic promise of listener elections, campaigning at WBAI is reviving old arguments about station board diversity, financial transparency and the very future of the Pacifica network.

FOUR SLATES

The election cycle underway at WBAI has exposed the deep factional lines that divide much of the station's active listenership. Controversies that have simmered in the background at WBAI for years have now exploded into public.

At least four loosely organized slates are competing for seats on the WBAI station board, and while the differences that divide them may seem minor, the competing platforms have deep roots. At least one of the four slates — a group of former and current station employees clustered around holistic health guru Gary Null — retains links to supporters of the "corporate" WBAI faction forced from power in January 2002. And while the other three blocs — Justice and Unity, List-Prog, and People's Radio — were once united in their opposition to the corporate faction, that hasn't stopped them from disagreeing, often virulently, about the future of the station (see sidebar).

For all their arguing, though, the electoral slates share similarities. List-Prog, Justice and Unity and People's Radio all boast their share of community activists, committed WBAI supporters and advocates of various left-wing causes. As in past disputes, much of the controversy seems to stem from an uneasy mixture of personal distrust and legitimate difference of opinion about the future of the Pacifica network. Many of these differences arise in discussions of diversity, one of the most contentious electoral issues.

POWER AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AT WBAI

As part of its political platform, the Justice and Unity slate has pledged to revisit Pacifica's new bylaws by implementing "affirmative action at every level of Pacifica through bylaws, amendments and policies."

"We would do it with the consultation of civil rights lawyers," notes Justice and Unity candidate Yvonne Liu. "And we'd [revisit the diversity bylaws] in good faith, because this is something we believe in. We aren't trying to stir up trouble or prolong the bylaws ratification process."

While not disagreeing about the need for a diverse Local Station Board, some members of List-Prog and People's Radio fear that a concerted effort to revise the national bylaws will not only subject Pacifica to legal and financial penalty but will distract WBAI from the more pressing financial and political issues facing the network.

"A lot of us in People's Radio and List-Prog

are absolutely opposed to these kinds of bylaws revisions at this point in time," says People's Radio's Paul Surovell.

James Ross of List-Prog concurs. "After seeing the way the 'incumbents' of the Justice and Unity slate behaved over the past two years regarding the bylaws, it's very clear to me that what they want to do would not pass the national board, and is probably illegal."

In addition, the issue of diversity has, at times, been clouded by charged language. In a controversial online post, List-Prog candidate Steven M. Brown noted "to cut out the (mostly) white, upscale, college-educated, liberal middle-class segment of our audience is to cut off our financial nose."

For his part, one member of Justice and Unity, Muntu Matsimela, sparked another tempest when he claimed in a widely circulated email that there was "a virtual lily white core of liberals and outright white supremacists who are opposed to the broad communities of color having the right to share power at

Complicating matters even further, Democratic Party stalwarts plan to introduce a "liberal radio network" in New York sometime in early 2004, potentially increasing the competition for left-wing ears and pledge dollars.

MOVING FORWARD?

Many Pacifica supporters shake their heads in dismay at the continuing controversies, which seem to have changed little over the past several years.

Expressing sentiments echoed by many in the WBAI community, one anonymous contributor to the New York City Independent Media Center website recently wrote that "this WBAI election closely resembles the negative, insult-laden campaigning that passes for 'politics' in the mainstream... as it is now, I can only discern which factions hate one another."

Patty Heffley, a long-time WBAI activist and candidate on the List-Prog slate, acknowledges that the disagreements sound familiar but argues, "History is important."

WBAI: THE SLATES

JUSTICE AND UNITY

The Justice and Unity slate can legitimately claim that they are the campaign with the deepest roots in segments of the progressive community. According to Justice and Unity listener-candidate Ray LaForest, "our slate shows a clear understanding that to make Pacifica a vital organization, we need to bring together the various communities that make up New York City." "This isn't something I see at the other slates," adds candidate Yvonne Liu. At the same time, Justice and Unity has faced charges that several of their candidates tacitly opposed the complete democratization of WBAI.

Although they are weaker on specifics when it comes to solving WBAI's financial crisis, Justice and Unity feels that its diversity and commitment to community involvement can only help the station broaden its membership base. "By reaching into the diverse communities we represent," argues LaForest, "we ought to be able to double, triple, quadruple our membership base."

LIST-PROG

"Our program may be a little less coherent than that of the other two slates," admits List-Prog candidate James Ross, "but what unites us is that most of us have been active in the movement to save Pacifica and to enact good government policies for many years." As a whole, List-Prog candidates have been the most consistent and articulate defenders of democracy at WBAI, with a few of them sounding the alarm about Pacifica's impending corporate takeover long before anyone else. Over the course of the campaign, List-Prog has faced accusations that they are disconnected from parts of the progressive New York City community.

List-Prog argues that, in order for WBAI to continue as a listener-funded media outlet, the station's budget must reflect its financial reality. "Either you get the listeners to give more," says Ross, "or you spend less."

MOVING FORWARD

Candidates with the Moving Forward slate have ties to both health-guru Gary Null and the old, corporate Pacifica board. One of them, Paul DiRenzo, bragged on air in 2001 that Amy Goodman and Democracy Now! would "never be heard on WBAI again." They are encouraging a listener boycott of the station.

PEOPLE'S RADIO

The People's Radio slate is perhaps the most pragmatically minded of the four WBAI factions vying for influence on the station. People's Radio candidate Paul Surovell says that "the centerpiece of our program is the proposal that Democracy Now! should be rebroadcast in the evening so more people can hear it... as it stands right now, Democracy Now! is hidden from 90 percent of its audience, and that makes WBAI hidden from a lot of potential funders as well."

Surovell concedes that People's Radio's avoidance of stirring rhetoric may be an electoral disadvantage, "Politics is all about rhetoric," he admits. But he contends "the people in this election who are engaged in rhetoric... are really losing sight of what's at stake here." WBAI, he notes, is "a radio station. And it's a radio station that's in deep financial trouble."

— CHRIS ANDERSON



Candidates from several slates speak at a January 11 forum held at the Indymedia office on 34 E. 29th St. Clockwise from upper left: Kathy Goldman (Independent), Ray LaForest (Justice and Unity), James Ross (List-Prog), Alice Shields (People's Radio), and Yvonne Liu (Justice and Unity)

WBAI." Both sides have been quick to accuse the other of negative campaign tactics.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Raising the stakes, WBAI faces an immediate crisis that may require winning candidates to overcome their sharp differences. "WBAI and Pacifica badly need board members who are serious, thoughtful, and willing and able to put in the time to analyze a set of complex problems and to set a course towards solutions," says listener activist and Interim-Pacific National Board member Carol Spooner.

In November 2003 the interim Pacifica board was informed that, barring a major financial turnaround, WBAI would be "functionally bankrupt" at the end of January. The current financial status of the station is uncertain at best.

In WBAI's most recent public financial statement, manager Don Rojas noted that the station had a cash balance of \$329,000, monthly operating expenses of \$306,000, and \$402,000 in outstanding pledges. Although the station plans to begin a pledge drive on Jan. 17 and hopes to raise \$1.1 million, recent drives have fallen far short of their goals.

"We are fighting the same battles," she admits, "but the stakes are much higher than they've ever been before... We're still fighting the same battles because we've never had a chance to actually resolve any of them in a legitimate way."

Heffley is nonetheless hopeful. "Once candidates get elected to the board, I have no doubt that they can work together to do what's best for Pacifica."

Surovell agrees. "I do think it's reasonable to expect that we all get along," he says. "Many of the candidates running aren't part of the history, haven't been exposed to all the factionalizing that's been floating around at this station for years."

And Yvonne Liu admits that, while her optimism may be partially fueled by the fact that she "hasn't been as involved in these battles as everyone else," she hopes that "everyone on the board can put those things in the past and move forward to do what's best for the station."

In the end, the ultimate success or failure of WBAI's democratic experiment will likely rest on the ability of board members to overcome past enmity and work together.

SOLD DOWN THE RIVER

"All kings is mostly rascallions, as far as I can make out."
— Huck Finn

Critics of the Bush administration have marvelled at the president's ability to maintain the unconditional support of roughly half the country. Runaway deficits, a jobless recovery, tax cuts for wealthy campaign contributors, massive subsidies for pharmaceutical companies disguised as Medicare "reform," a misguided war started on patently false pretenses. Like the "King of France" and the "Duke of Bilgewater" in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, the Bush-Cheney crew moves from one confidence game to the next. How do they get away with it?

Blame Murdoch and the right-wing media some say. Or Karl Rove and his evil spin machine. Here's another possibility: many people are ashamed to admit they've been suckered.

When the King and the Duke put on a bawdy vaudeville show called the Royal Nonesuch, the audience is appalled. But they can't let on. As a local judge who is in the crowd explains, "We are sold — mighty badly sold. But we don't want to be the laughing stock of this whole town, I reckon, and never hear the last of this thing as long as we live. NO. What we want is to go out of here quiet, and talk this show up, and sell the REST of the town! Then we'll all be in the same boat. Ain't that sensible?"

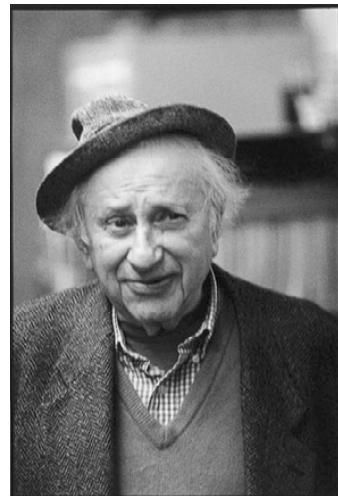
Further down the river, the King and the Duke set to bilking a trio of sisters out of their inheritance. One of the sisters ("harelip") becomes skeptical and trips Huck up with some tough questions before being silenced by the beautiful Mary Jane who retorts, "It don't make no difference what he SAID — that ain't the thing. The thing is for you to treat him KIND, and not be saying things to make him remember he ain't in his own country and amongst his own folks."

Those who supported the war against their better judgment have little choice but to play along with the farce. The media still breathlessly reports every rumor of weapons of mass destruction being found in Iraq. Candidates Gephardt, Kerry, Edwards and Lieberman (who all voted in favor of the war) continue attacking frontrunner Howard Dean for not believing strongly enough in Bush and the war. But nothing compares to the sorry behavior of *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, who continues to support the invasion despite disagreeing with almost every aspect of its premises, planning and post-war execution.

Now, we have the surprising spectacle of former Treasury Secretary and Alcoa CEO Paul O'Neill coming forward to confirm the worst suspicions of Bush's critics. In a just-released book (*The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*), O'Neill tells journalist Ron Suskind that Bush led cabinet meetings "like a blind man in a room full of deaf people" and that the conquest of Iraq was being planned from the first days of the administration. Even before September 11, the Pentagon was devising plans to carve up Iraq's oilfields among various international companies. It's a devastating portrait of a disengaged president surrounded by right-wing ideologues hellbent on launching a war.

Will the O'Neill charges stick? Or will Americans continue to be quiet and talk the Bush show up, until we're "all in the same boat?"

— JOHN TARLETON



BY MATTHEW LEONARD

A master of displaying the extraordinary within the everyday, 91-year-old oral historian Studs Terkel continues to assemble a compelling alternative history of the United States. His portraits, culled from the mouths of individuals in widely varying circumstances, seek to illuminate the hopefulness that animates activism and social change.

After works addressing "the visceral stuff — the job, age, race, and death," including *Working* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Good War*, Terkel here tackles a century of

BOOK REVIEW

HOPE DIES LAST

BY STUDS TERKEL THE NEW PRESS, 320 PP

engagement. These accounts make history vivid by borrowing the eyes and voices of direct participants.

Terkel, like the archetypal storyteller, orchestrates the colorful tales of our collective history. He weaves together the stories of economists, student activists, custodians, undocumented workers. We enter the lives of community and labor organizers, lawyers, teachers, priests and even the pilot of the aircraft that dropped the atomic bomb over Hiroshima.

Seeking to combat "passivity, in the face of such a bold, unabashed show of power" by the Bush administration, Terkel takes us through grassroots movements and social change from the Great Depression to the Iraq war.

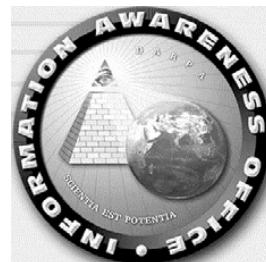
He discusses the anti-Vietnam War mobilization, the civil-rights era and the struggles of labor and community activists today. These stories keep a vigil over the spark of hope that electrifies most social movements by showing us the "inheritors of the legacy of the past." There is Carole Travis, whose father led the 44-day sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, in 1937. She remembers how her parents put a swing between the living room and the dining room to entertain her during their long meetings. She became

president of a United Auto Workers local and a labor lawyer.

The parents of a young Elaine Jones forced her to go alone to court to protest an outrageous dentist bill. She found her calling as a director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense Fund.

While Terkel has a predilection for blue-collar labor organizers, his interviews also include Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, John Kenneth Galbraith and Dennis Kucinich. He gives voice to Guatemalan immigrants and an Iraqi-American, shedding light on current troubles. The collection finishes up with the inspiring and unlikely tale of Harvard students collaborating with custodians and cooks in a successful sit-in during their "Living Wage Campaign."

These stories from the front line of movements for social change are undeniably moving. They impel one to act and, as Kathy Kelley of Voices in the Wilderness says, never "be sitting on the sidelines... and just watch some unspeakable evil happen." By bringing these stories to us, Terkel becomes a conduit for a rich tradition to reach the next generation of activists. And that is both extraordinary and hopeful.



A CULTURE OF CONTROL

A STORY IN THE FIRST PERSON BY DONALD PANETH

On Saturday afternoon, Jan. 3, 2004, I visited the Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center — and was dealt with as a potential terrorist.

I wanted to see a video of the one-act play, *Hughie*, by Eugene O'Neill. I had seen it on Broadway with Jason Robards Jr. Characters in the play were "Erie" Smith, a teller of tales, Hughie and the Night Clerk at the Times Square hotel where Erie rooms. O'Neill writes: "It is one of those hotels, built in the decade 1909-10 on the side streets of the Great White Way... now... a third class dump..."

But, a new regulation for using the library's research facilities has been introduced.

Those facilities include the Performing Arts library, Room 315 at the library's 42nd St. main branch; the science, industry, and business library, and the Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture.

I was required to apply for a library access card.

The library acknowledged in a brochure explaining the requirement that it is a system for control.

"The ACCESS card and the circulation system will ensure greater accountability when researchers use library materials," the brochure said. "No personal information will be disclosed to any third party, except when required by law."

Except when required by law.

Requests for research materials would be subject to examination by police, FBI agents, security operatives.

I filled out an application, presented ID, was photographed and received the card.

I acquiesced, as the library also has acquiesced to the new culture

of suspicion and scrutiny that two days after my library visit added another level of monitoring — the fingerprinting and photographing of foreign visitors with visas at all points of entry into the United States.

These are not innocuous measures, which no one but a terrorist, bomber, or assassin need fear.

They are intrusive, dangerous and totalitarian.

Moreover, they can be put into effect administratively, no further legislation than what's already on the books is necessary.

The U.S. government — at the moment, the Bush administration — is seeking, I think, to institute a system of total, complete, absolute control over the American population.

Americans are going along with this stuff in the belief that if they are law-abiding and keep their heads down they will be left alone.

Perhaps they will.

The power elites now running the United States need a compliant work force and a big enforcement apparatus. Protesters, dissenters, non-conformists will become identifiable in various ways, one of the ways being scrutiny of library records.

A system of apartheid is being created behind the mask of fighting terrorism and protecting America. To be segregated are those who are different, who are angry at the deception and fraud being perpetrated, who are without power but nevertheless resistant to the creation of an authoritarian state.

I fear that like O'Neill's Times Square hotel, America is becoming a third-class dump, which "manages to keep running by cutting the overhead for service, repairs and cleanliness to a minimum."

LA HISTORIA ES DE QUIEN LA TRABAJA EL FUEGO Y LA PALABRA

“...Porque no es solo disparando con proyectiles en los campos de batalla como se barren las tiranías, también lanzando ideas de redención, frases de libertad y anatemas terribles contra los verdugos del pueblo, se derrumban dictaduras, se derrumban imperios...” —Emiliano Zapata

POR LYDIA NERI

El mismo día en que México “dejó de pertenecer a los países tercumerindistas” y entró triunfal a formar parte de los países “en vías de desarrollo” gracias a la firma del Tratado de Libre Comercio con América del Norte, el Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, desde las montañas del sureste mexicano se levantaba en armas para decir: ¡Ya basta!

Hartos de 500 años de lucha, de ser carne de cañón en una guerra etnocida; harts del saqueo de las riquezas naturales de sus tierras, de morir de hambre sin techo, sin tierra, sin trabajo, sin salud, sin alimentos, sin educación, sin libertad, sin paz ni justicia, gritaron el 1 de enero de 1994: “HOY DECIMOS ¡BASTA!, somos los herederos de los verdaderos forjadores de nuestra nacionalidad, los desposeídos somos millones y llamamos a todos nuestros hermanos a que se sumen a este llamado como el único camino para no morir de hambre ante la ambición insaciable de una dictadura de más de 70 años encabezada por una camarilla de traidores que representan a los grupos más conservadores y vendepatrias.”

Han sido 10 años de lucha y resistencia donde ellos, “los más pequeños”, los desheredados quienes forman parte de una población indígena continental de más de 60 millones de personas, se plantaron ante el *Supremo gobierno*, con la Primer Declaración de la Selva Lacandona demandando trabajo, tierra, techo, alimentación, salud, educación, libertad, independencia, democracia, justicia, paz y la formación de un gobierno libre y democrático sin dependencia de los extranjeros.

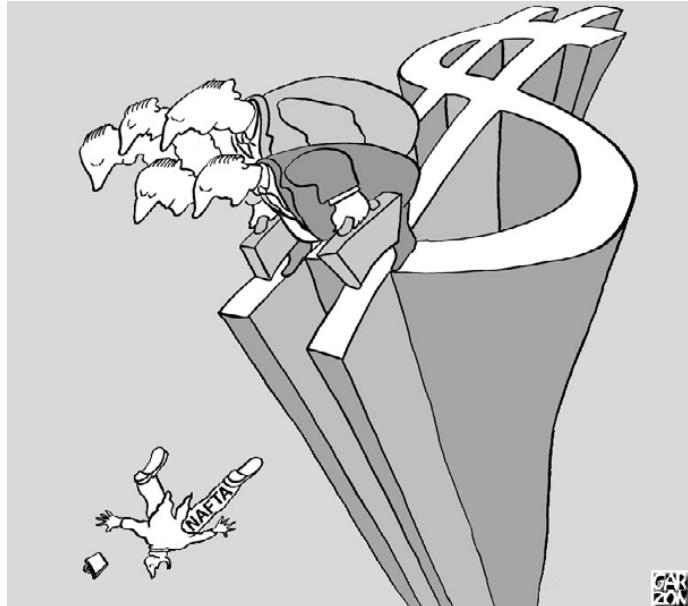
Esas voces indígenas que hablaron con la “dignidad rebelde”, que demandaron “todo para todos, nada para nosotros”; que exigieron “un gobierno que mande obedeciendo”, éssos que apoyan con sus actos sus palabras y que descubrieron que con la palabra se puede derrumbar imperios, tienen y han tenido una resonancia profunda en las mentes, las acciones y los corazones de miles, de millones de personas alrededor del mundo, en un eco que continúa magnificándose en ondas de rebeldía mundial y que congrega y confluye en una sola voz que lucha, desde muchos lugares del planeta, por un otro mundo. Ellos, el corazón olvidado de la patria, están hoy más vigentes que nunca, “Ni

nos callamos ni nos fuimos”, dicen en la celebración de los 10 años de Zapatismo.

Transcurrieron 10 años y 3 presidentes en México que respondieron al movimiento indígena con mentiras, traición, prepotencia, amenazas, racismo, exterminio. Los tres se han mantenido sordos a las demandas nacionales e internacionales, ciegos ante la evidencia de lo que sus gobiernos Neoliberales y sus tratados comerciales han hecho con la Nación mexicana y mudos frente a la violación de los derechos humanos de sus gobernados y de la Carta Magna de la Constitución ante la que juraron. Contrario a las predicciones que el TLC ofreció: pleno desarrollo económico, mejoramiento del nivel de vida de los habitantes, armonización de los estándares medioambientales; cifras oficiales del Banco Mundial demuestran que en México la pobreza se ha profundizado dramáticamente, el 70 por ciento de la población vive debajo de la línea de pobreza y la degradación medioambiental ha ascendido a un 10 % del PBI anual. Hoy por hoy México es considerado uno de los países con mayor desigualdad del hemisferio. Todo por servir a sus majestades: la globalización y las multinacionales.

Pero la globalización ha sido para los Zapatistas instrumento y medio, la red y los hilos para congregar a la sociedad civil mexicana y a los miles de jóvenes, campesinos, intelectuales, artistas, Bandas, políticos, escritores, activistas, ecologistas, feministas, y ONG nacionales e internacionales que coincidieron con las demandas del EZ desde el 94 y que en 1996, en el Primer Encuentro por la Humanidad y contra el Neoliberalismo se unieron en el Aguascalientes de la Realidad, Chiapas, y ahí bordaron con todos los colores de sus multiculturas el ¡Ya Basta! Zapatista. Ese día, la punta de la madeja empezó a desenredar la historia contada desde una sola versión y juntos los movimientos de resistencia popular de docenas de países comenzaron organizados a través de la palabra, a tejer otra historia en contra del mismo enemigo; las batallas en Porto Alegre, Seattle, Génova, Cancún, son sólo unos ejemplos.

10 largos años han sido para los Zapatistas de lucha, trabajo, resistencia, muerte, carencias, sufrimiento, esperanzas, desesperanzas, de crecimiento, de aprendizaje, de hacer camino. Y llegaron al Congreso y dijeron su palabra. Y traicionados por todos los partidos políticos,



pero con la claridad que en el contrapeso de la palabra, el silencio otorga, dejaron de pedir permiso y a su tiempo, crearon las Juntas de Buen Gobierno para autogobernarse en cada uno de los Municipios Autónomos Zapatistas: “Está claro que ningún gobierno nos va a dar el derecho y la libertad para vivir dignamente, por eso ahora no pedimos, ni exigimos, ahora nos toca actuar y ejercer nuestros derechos como pueblos legítimos y primeros pobladores de nuestro país”.

Mientras los neoliberales comienzan el año incumpliendo a los pueblos y preparando la firma del ALCA para tener no solo el control de México sino de toda América Latina, lo que augura, según el Nobel de Economía, Joseph Stiglitz: “el riesgo de la paz y la prosperidad en el hemisferio”; para los Zapatistas el comienzo de la siguiente década es una nueva convoca-

toria que invita a seguir tejendo caminos de resistencia y libertad junto a los muchos movimientos populares del mundo: “Invitamos a todos los pueblos indígenas a que se unan y se organicen para ejercer sus derechos como pueblos y no tengan miedo de hacerlo, porque no es ningún delito unirse y organizarse para buscar y trabajar por una vida digna para nuestros pueblos y el futuro de nuestros hijos, para que sean verdaderos herederos de nuestra raza, de nuestra cultura y de nuestra historia”.

No morirá la flor de la palabra.

Sitios recomendados:
www.americaspolicy.org El TLC un cuento moral.
www.ciepac.org 1-5 Declaración de la Selva Lacandona.

MÉXICO DESPUES DEL TLC

- México ha tenido un crecimiento económico de menos de un 1% per capita anual.
- Los salarios han descendido en un 60 %.
- El número de hogares que vive en la pobreza ha crecido un 80%.
- Un tercio de la población económicamente activa trabaja en el sector informal.
- 60% de los niños indígenas tienen desnutrición severa.
- La degradación medioambiental ha ascendido a un 10% del PIB, lo que equivale a 36 billones de dólares anuales.
- El precio de la canasta básica creció 257% entre 1994 y 2002.
- La erosión del suelo rural ha crecido en casi un 89% y la contaminación atmosférica en torno a un 97%.
- Se incrementó la emigración de la población rural y urbana hacia los EE.UU.
- Está amenazada la rica reserva de biodiversidad de plantas cultivadas por los granjeros tradicionales.
- 25 millones de mexicanos viven en la pobreza extrema, aunque estudios más rigurosos arrojan una cifra de hasta 40 millones.

Datos del Banco Mundial y el gobierno de México.

NEW YORK ZAPATISTAS

Así como en los municipios autónomos de Chiapas, en la ciudad de México y muchos lugares en la República Mexicana; al sur de América en Bolivia, Chile, Brasil, Argentina, en Europa en Italia, Barcelona, Génova y en muchos otras ciudades del mundo, los New York Zapatistas celebraron este enero 3 en el Centro Cultural Clemente Soto Vélez, desde las 5 y hasta la medianoche, El 20/10 el fuego y la palabra, por el surgimiento del EZLN, en sus 20 años de formación y 10 de levantamiento.

Con videos, Danza, poesía, música, teatro, artesanías, ponche, tamales y atole aproximadamente 300 personas celebraron la resistencia y cantaron por un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos.

EL INDEPENDIENTE



POR SILVIA ARANA

Bush anunció lineamientos para una reforma migratoria en un momento oportuno: pocos días antes de la reunión con el presidente de México Vicente Fox y como anticipo del lanzamiento de su plataforma para las elecciones presidenciales en Estados Unidos. El voto hispano tendrá un peso clave en estas elecciones. En los comicios



INMIGRANTES: Protagonistas o invitados de piedra

pasados los estados con una fuerte presencia hispana, como la Florida, tuvieron un rol decisivo. (Sin desestimar la ayuda del hermano de Bush y sus aliados cubanos de Miami.) Para las próximas, el aparato republicano no quiere zozobras y buscará asegurarse un 40% del voto latino. Ese es un porcentaje altísimo, si se considera que los latinos solían votar mayoritariamente por los demócratas, aunque esa tendencia empezó a revertirse en las pasadas elecciones, en las que Bush logró un 35% del voto latino.

El proyecto de Bush se basa esencialmente en el antiguo "programa bracero". Consiste en autorizar a empresas norteamericanas a contratar a trabajadores inmigrantes por un período determinado de tiempo, siempre y cuando no consigan ciudadanos que quieran tomar esos trabajos. Los inmigrantes que participen en el programa podrán entrar y salir del país sin problemas. Los trabajadores deberán regresar a sus países de origen al expirar sus contratos de trabajo. Aunque no se descarta que algunos apliquen por la residencia permanente. (Ver recuadro con traducción resumida del anuncio de Bush.)

Este plan de reforma es muy limitado como propuesta. Con una población de inmigrantes indocumentados calculada entre los 8 y los 12 millones, y que continúa creciendo, un programa bracero controlado por las empresas no es suficiente. Muchos de estos inmigrantes han puesto su vida en riesgo al cruzar la frontera en medio del desierto o escondidos en un camión de carga. Cuántos de ellos van a salir de "las sombras" por una legalización temporal de tres o seis años?

Algunos sectores de derecha lo han atacado con el argumento de que favorecería la inmigración ilegal y que el flujo de trabajadores extranjeros incrementaría el desempleo. Los sectores ultraconservadores del partido republicano lanzaron sus críticas de inmediato. Lou Dobbs de CNN se sumó a la histeria anti-

inmigrante: "Necesitamos proteger nuestras fronteras! No podemos perder más trabajos por culpa de los inmigrantes!". Sus invitados, Bren Wilkes de LULAC y Angela Kelley del Foro Nacional de Inmigración, respondieron que éste es un país de inmigrantes, que todos nos beneficiamos de la mano de obra de estos trabajadores. Dobbs interrumpió diciendo que las únicas que se beneficiaban eran las empresas que contrataban a ilegales y que el problema no lo había creado Estados Unidos, sino México. Kelley le preguntó: "Pero, en qué país vive usted? No sabe que las niñeras que cuidan a nuestros hijos son inmigrantes? Que los cocineros y los camareros que nos preparan y sirven la comida son inmigrantes?"

Sectores sindicales y varias asociaciones de inmigrantes manifestaron oposición categórica. John Sweeney, presidente de la AFL-CIO, dijo que el plan agudizará las condiciones para el abuso y la explotación de los trabajadores que participen en él y reducirá los derechos y los salarios de los trabajadores norteamericanos. (Curiosamente en este último punto coincide con grupos conservadores como la Federación por la Reforma de Leyes Migratorias.)

Katherine Culliton, abogada del Fondo de Defensa Legal de los Mexico-Americanos (MALDEF, según su sigla en inglés) dijo que apreciaba el reconocimiento de Bush de que el sistema no funciona pero que un programa de trabajadores temporales no era suficiente. Agregó que no proporciona igualdad de derechos laborales, unidad familiar o camino a la ciudadanía. Arturo Rodríguez, presidente del sindicato de jornaleros (United Farm Workers) dijo: "Esta no es una amnistía, de seguro. No me parece, en base a lo que he escuchado y leído, que el presidente Bush se haya enfocado en los problemas reales que enfrentamos nosotros y los inmigrantes en EE.UU. Su plan no proporciona un camino a la legalización de los inmigrantes que ya

están aquí ni de los que vendrán como trabajadores huéspedes."

Desde otra perspectiva, Mónica Santana del Centro de Trabajadores Latinos y miembro de la Coalición Nacional por la Dignidad y la Amnistía dijo: "Primero hay que clarificar que Bush no hizo una propuesta, él hizo una declaración política. Es el Congreso el que va a debatir las propuestas de reforma migratoria que fueron presentadas ante ese organismo. Entre esas propuestas, figura la presentada por

tres senadores republicanos (McCain es uno de ellos). Esa iniciativa tomó un 80% de nuestra propuesta (de la Coalición Nacional), que había sido anteriormente presentada ante numerosos congresistas demócratas. Primero la llamamos propuesta de Amnistía y luego pasó a llamarse de Legalización de los trabajadores indocumentados. Muchos de los políticos demócratas ni siquiera se tomaron el tiempo para leer nuestra propuesta; y si lo hacían rechazaban ciertos términos, como "amnistía". Finalmente, el congresista demócrata Luis Gutiérrez, se mostró receptivo. Trabajamos con él pero fue reduciendo tanto los alcances de su propuesta que hoy no podemos apoyarla porque establece que la legalización sólo beneficiará a las personas que ingresaron al país antes de 1998. Cinco años de brecha! No podemos apoyar una propuesta que deje afuera a los millones que entraron al país en estos últimos cinco años, los peores en las crisis económicas de América Latina. En resumen, apoyaremos la propuesta que más ha tomado de nuestra propia propuesta y ese es el proyecto de ley presentado por McCain."

El Centro de Trabajadores Latinos y la Coalición Nacional realizarán reuniones en el área metropolitana para discutir con los trabajadores inmigrantes la propuesta presentada por McCain. Y a nivel nacional, harán marchas y movilizaciones para debatir el tema migratorio con la participación activa de los propios inmigrantes.

Mientras sindicalistas y políticos demócratas y republicanos se acusan mutuamente de demagogos, el Centro de Trabajadores Latinos reafirma que ésta es una lucha humanitaria, por los derechos humanos de los inmigrantes, por los derechos laborales y la reunificación familiar de millones de personas. Se está debatiendo su destino y no van a permitir que los excluyan una vez más.

¿NUEVA PROPUESTA?

El miércoles 7 de enero de 2004, Bush anunció que apoyaría una reforma migratoria con los siguientes parámetros:

1. Continuar con la protección de las fronteras de EE.UU
2. Las nuevas leyes migratorias deben atender a las necesidades económicas del país. Si una empresa necesita trabajadores y ningún ciudadano aplica, será necesario abrir las puertas a extranjeros que hagan esos trabajos.
3. No se debe favorecer a los inmigrantes ilegales dándoles ventajas sobre los que emigraron legalmente.
4. Las nuevas leyes deben proporcionar incentivos para que los trabajadores temporales regresen a sus países de origen al expirar su contrato en EE.UU.

Pidió al Congreso que sancione nuevas leyes migratorias explicitando que él apoyaría un programa para trabajadores temporales dispuestos a hacer trabajos que los ciudadanos no quieran o puedan hacer. Se ofrecería estatus legal a los trabajadores

indocumentados que muestren interés en participar en él y que hayan recibido una oferta o tengan un trabajo. El estatus legal durará tres años y será renovable, pero no indefinidamente. Los participantes que pierdan su empleo, que no cumplan con las reglas o tengan problemas con la ley serán separados del programa y se les exigirá que regresen a sus países de origen.

Los participantes recibirán un documento certificando su estatus con el que podrán viajar a sus países de origen y regresar a EE.UU. sin problemas.

Este programa considera que los trabajadores temporales regresarán a sus países cuando haya expirado su trabajo en EE.UU. Para facilitar esto, se planean acuerdos con los gobiernos de esos países para establecer incentivos financieros: crédito de tiempo trabajado que cuente en el sistema jubilatorio de la nación de origen al igual que cajas de ahorro. Si un trabajador temporal desea permanecer en EE.UU. podrá aplicar a la ciudadanía siguiendo el procedimiento legal. Termina diciendo que se opone a una amnistía que otorgue a los trabajadores indocumentados la ciudadanía.